Government to monitor austerity measures

*411. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the guidelines issued to various Ministries to observe austerity measures and reduce expenditure:

(b) how does Government monitor such guidelines;

(c) whether it is a fact that many Public Sector Units are acquiring luxury vehicles and not observing austerity guidelines;

(d) what steps will be taken to enforce austerity measures;

(e) whether ostentation by Government Departments and Public Sector Units is sending a wrong message on Government's austerity programme; and

(f) the steps proposed to enforce austerity in expenditure on costly equipment, costly travel and luxury vehicles?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (f) Keeping the Government expenditure under control is a continuous process and instructions in this regard are issued from time to time. These instructions include reduction in posts, ban on air travel by first class, ban on accommodation in hotel suites while on tour, reduction in consumption/ expenditure on petrol, restriction on OTA, entertainment, decorative lighting & electricity, restriction on purchase of vehicles, etc. Instructions also exist that luxury cars, such as Contessa, NE Fiat, Maruti 1000 should not be purchased. Financial Advisers attached to different Ministries/ Departments are required to ensure that the economy instructions issued by the Government are scruplously followed. Separate instructions exist that Public Sector Units should avoid obstentatious expenditure and observe austerity measures. Instructions have also been issued that the Public Sector Enterprises should not purchase expensive cars.

Threat to Doordarshan by Satellite Communication

*412. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a newsitem published in the Hindustan Times. dated 25th July, 1994 under the caption ""Doordarshan unfazed by invasion from skies";

(b) if so, whether due to high competition of Satellite communication, Doordarshan has failed to compete; and

(c) if so, what are the plans and objectives of Doordarshan to compete with Satellite communication?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The primary task of Doordarshan is to inform, educate and entertain the people of this country. Without deviating from its assigned task, Doordarshan will, as it has done in the past, continue to respond appropriately to competition from different quarters.

Encashment of fraudulent cheques and dividend warrants

*413. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the encashment of fraudulent cheques and dividend warrants, drafts and pay orders, a lucrative business

running into several thousand crores of rupees every year, is being carried on by the operators with the connivance of bank officials and postmen;

(b) if so, what are the details of cases of fraudulent payments which have come to Government's notice during each of the last three years;

(c) what are the names of banks and the details of frauds committed by the operators in each bank during the period mentioned above;

(d) what action has been taken against the bank officials and others found involved in such fraudulent deals; and

(e) what preventive steps Government have taken so far to check such frauds in banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that it had received complaints during the latter half of the year 1993 from companies/investors against interception of the interest/dividend warrants, refund orders, etc. issued by various companies/institutions by unscrupulous persons who got them encashed at the branches of commercial banks by opening accounts in fictitious names/benami accounts. By and large the modusoperandi employed in such fraudulent transactions can be broadly categorised as under:—

(a) Opening of fictitious accounts and lodgement/collection of stolen/ pilfered/benami instruments and subsequent withdrawal of the proceeds thereof.

(b) Collection/lodgement of third party instruments in genuinely opened current accounts and subsequent withdrawal of the proceeds thereof.

(c) Encashment of payment instruments wherein payee names and maturity amounts were chemically altered and the instruments were collected through fictitious accounts.

RBI do not have details of cases of fraudulent payments during each of the last three years. However, the information furnished by the public sector banks to RBI revealed that fraudulent encashments have taken place in 214 accounts during the period from 1st April, 1992 to 30th October, 1993 in 18 public sector banks with a total turnover of about Rs. 136 crores.

(c) and (d) The bank-wise information in respect of 18 public sector banks which reported such transactions to RBI during the period from 1st April, 1992 to 30th October, 1993 is given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below).

(e) RBI advised all the banks in November, 1993 to issue necessary instructions to their branches to strictly adhere to the prescribed procedures/ guidelines in regard to opening and operating of bank accounts failing which punitive action would be taken against the officials violating prescribed safeguards.

Banks have been advised to introduce from 1st January, 1994 a system of obtaining photographs of depositors/ persons authorised to operate new deposit accounts which will facilitate identification of miscreants by the investigating agencies and act as deterrent to unscrupulous persons.

Banks have also been advised to introduce a system of concurrent audit of large branches and the concurrent auditors are required to check any unusual operations particularly in new current/savings bank accounts.

A close watch is kept on operations in new accounts by the branches. Further, at the time

of internal inspection of the branches the opening and operations is new accounts are checked.

The RBI inspecting officers also scrutinise the banks records on sample basis to see whether the prescribed guidelines/instructions in regard to opening of new accounts are scrupulously followed.

Statement

Details of fraudulent Encashment of refund orders, interest/dividend warrants, etc. as reported by the Public Sector Banks

Sl.No.	Name of the Bank	No. of accounts	Whether staff connivance found	Action taken against the erring official
1.	State Bank of India	30	Only in one case involvement of staff is suspected.	FIR lodged with Police.
2.	State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur	4	No	—
3.	Allahabad Bank	3	No	—
4.	Andhra Bank	3	No	—
5.	Bank of Baroda	14	Yes	2 Branch Managers have been suspended—3 other officers transferred.
6.	Bank of India	28	No	—
7.	Bank of Maharashtra	10	No	—
8.	Canara Bank	11	Only in one case	The Bank has lodged complaint with Police.
9.	Central Bank of India	56	Yes	Manager/Assistant Manager of Girgaum branch; Assistant Manager of Zaveri Bazar branch, Bombay, suspended, Manager of Null Bazar branch transferred.
10.	Corporation Bank	4	No	—
11.	Dena Bank	1	No	—
12.	Indian Bank	19	No	—
13.	Oriental Bank of Commerce	2	No	—
14.	Punjab National Bank	15	Involvement suspected in 4 accounts.	Complaint lodged with CBI
15.	Syndicate Bank	4	No	—
16.	Union Bank of India	6	No	—
17.	United Bank of India	2	No	—
18.	Vijaya Bank	2	No	—
	TOTAL:	214		

आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन केन्द्रों की स्थापना के लिए मानदंड

*414. **चौधरी हरमोहन सिंह:**
श्री आस मोहम्मद:

क्या सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन केन्द्रों की स्थापना के लिए क्या मानदंड अपनाए गए हैं;

(ख) क्या आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन केन्द्र कुछ ऐसे स्थानों/जिलों में स्थापित नहीं किए गए हैं जो अपेक्षित मानदंडों को पूरा करते हैं; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है और इसके क्या कारण हैं?

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री के.पी. सिंह देव): (क) आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन केन्द्रों के स्थापना के मानदंडों में अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ ट्रांसमीटर पद्धति तथा तकनीकी उपयुक्तता, ग्रामीण और शहरी जनसंख्या के परिणामी कवरेज की सीमा, पहाड़ी, पिछड़े आदिवासी, दूरस्थ, संवेदनशील तथा सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों को सेवाएं प्रदान करने का प्रावधान; मूल आधारभूत सुविधाओं की उपलब्धता आदि जैसे कारक शामिल हैं, ऐतिहासिक तथा सांस्कृतिक महत्व के स्थानों को भी ध्यान में रखा जाता है। विभिन्न स्थानों पर टी.वी. कार्यक्रम निर्माण सुविधाओं की स्थापना निम्नलिखित पैरामीटर द्वारा विनियंत्रित होती है:-